The Maple Hill Farm

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Depending upon the weather, tending the fires is a 15- to 18-day task. Carter must make sure the fires stay lit and the barn temperature remains a constant 95-98 degrees. "More tobacco is ruined with too much fire than with too little," he said.

Once the tobacco has cured to Carter's liking, the fires are extinguished and the rich leaves graded, bundled and packed on baskets for their December trip to a Lynchburg market. Here Carter consistently receives top prices for his product. In 1981, he averaged $2 per pound, almost 73 cents above the average price of $1.27.

Carter's yield of 2,300 pounds an acre is almost double the county average. He cites several reasons for this: strong tobacco seedlings, transplanting seedlings from the plant bed to the field around May 20, smart use of irrigation, and good insect and sucker control.

However, the real key, he says, is "learning to be patient and using good wood."

The silver-haired farmer's expertise was recognized by state officials when former Gov. John D. Dalton appointed Carter to the five-member Virginia Dark-Fired Tobacco Commission.

In addition to tobacco, Maple Hill Farm supports an

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The Edlee Acres story

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activity."

The Andersons are active in their county Farm Bureau and enjoy weekly square-dancing with the Appomattox Grand Squares. Five grandchildren, ranging in age from two to six, are also important parts of Ed and Leeanne's life.

Not by accident, Edlee Acres is an attractive farm. The farm buildings were kept low for a purpose. "When I look out over the farm, the buildings don't obstruct my view of things," Ed explained. "I think it makes the whole place look more scenic."

Old dairy buildings that stood when the Andersons bought the farm were either torn down or modified to comply with Ed's plan. Not only was the farm a former dairy, but it also served as the county poor farm at one time. "It still does for that matter," laughed Ed.

Even with the long hours, uncertainty of cattle prices and rising operating costs, Ed is happy with the life of farming. "I think everyone needs a little pressure. At least I do," he noted. "I find it stimulating to have goals and then work to meet them."

Would Ed recommend farming to his grandchildren? "Not to get rich at," he revealed, "but I don't think money is all a person should want out of life. As long as you enjoy what you're doing, that's life."

Edlee Acres will be showcased on the sixth annual Virginia Farm Management Tour. The farms will be open to the public from 9:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. Saturday, July 17.

The tour is sponsored by the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service in cooperation with Appomattox County agricultural leaders. For more information, contact a local Extension office.

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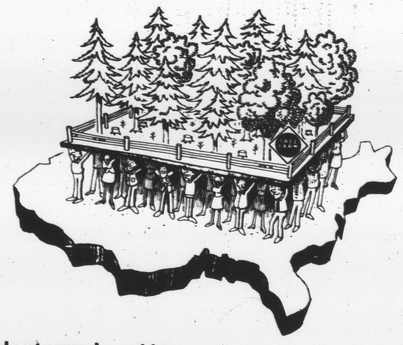

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Clarence Jones Farm

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agree that farming has been a good life for them and their eight-year-old son, Bruce.

"Good management is the reason it has been so good," said James A. Smith, Appomattox County Extension agent. "They stay on top of tobacco and know what varieties to grow and exactly what chemicals to use. Those two are very knowledgeable in their work and it shows in their outstanding yields." Last year yields were 2,800 lbs./acre in flue-cured, 2,000 lbs./acre in burley and over 1,800 lbs./acre in dark fire-cured.

Because of their ability to maintain a highly profitable and productive farm, the Jones farm was chosen to be featured on the sixth annual Virginia Farm Management Tour, Saturday, July 17, in Appomattox County.

Six farms will be open to the public from 9:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. The self-directed tour is being sponsored by the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service in cooperation with Appomattox County agricultural leaders.

The Maple Hill Farm

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outstanding herd of 50 Polled Hereford beef cows allowing some flexibility in the management scheme.

Good pastures and the use of performance-tested bulls contribute to the above-average growth rate of the cattle. Carter regularly markets 600-pound steers (the state average is 425 pounds).

He produces all of his livestock feed saying, "If I don't have feed, I sell the cow." His crop rotational system includes 12 acres of corn, 25 acres of hay and 12 acres of wheat.

The efficient farm manager also betters state calf crop percentages. "I had 37 cows eligible to calve this year," Carter said. "When the calving season was over, there were 35 calves on the ground, or about a 94 percent calf crop." The state average is 85 percent.

Carter's wife of 40 years, Louise, also built quite a reputation for quality at Appomattox High School before her retirement in 1976.

"I taught school for 30 years and coached girls' sports for 17 years," Louise recalled. During her career, she compiled an impressive won-loss record in basketball, volleyball and softball.

Today Louise is the expected prototype of a former physical education teacher--tanned, healthy and active. The 65-year-old grandmother of two averages five miles of jogging each day and frequently enters 10 kilometer (6.2 miles) races.

"I didn't begin racing until after my retirement," she said. "I've been pretty successful in the 50-and-over division." Louise has won first place in all but one race, and she took second place in that event.

She also keeps busy on the farm--baling hay, running errands, digging up thistles and gathering eggs from their 50 chickens. "Louise is really the only hired help I've got," Carter laughed. "She's the cheapest I've got

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